

Remarks

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed February 24, 2005. At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-5 and 7-25 were pending in this application. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-5 and 7-25. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above application in view of the following remarks.

Rejection of claims 1-5 and 7-9 under 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tatham, Dougherty* and *Skok*

Claims 1-5 and 7-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,223,177 (*Tatham*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,370,575 (*Dougherty*) and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0091725 (*Skok*). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection of claims 1-5 and 7-9 because the *Tatham-Dougherty-Skok* combination fails to teach, suggest, or disclose various aspects of these claims.

The *Tatham-Dougherty-Skok* combination does not teach, disclose, or suggest the pending claims. For instance, this combinations does not provide the following limitations of claim 1:

- (1) "assigning a review authority to one or more of the team members in the pluralities of first and second team members"
- (2) "transmitting the data to at least one of the one or more team members having review authority for review and approval"; and
- (3) "receiving approval from the at least one of the one or more team members having review authority prior to associating the data with one or more of the activities"

The Examiner admits that these limitations are not taught, disclosed or suggested by *Tatham* and *Dougherty*. See Office Action, February 24, 2005, pp. 5 and 6. The Examiner relies on *Skok* to provide a teaching of these limitations. Assuming that it is proper to combine these three references, their combined teachings do not provide the claimed invention. At best, *Skok* provided for general document approval in the context of a web-publishing environment.

The Examiner opines that *Skok* “discloses sending the document for approval by a webmaster or other nominated personnel before being published for others to view”. See Office Action, February 24, 2005, p. 6. Even assuming that the Examiner is correct, *Skok* does not teach, disclose, or suggest approval in a “virtual team room environment” having first and second members. This structured environment is conducive to “collaboration among team members of separate diverse organizations” – an objective not provided by *Skok*. According to claim 1, a team member is assigned review authority. *Skok* does not recognize the virtual team room environment, and therefore, does not provide assignment of review authority according to the claimed invention.

Moreover, *Skok* does not teach, disclose or suggest “transmitting the data to at least one of the one or more team members having review authority for review and approval ... [and] receiving approval from the at least one of the one or more team members having review authority prior to associating the data with one or more of the activities”. According to *Skok*, the web page is approved by an authorized individual. However, this individual is not affiliated with a team working in collaborative environment. Moreover, *Skok* does not provide “associating the data with one or more activities”. To the contrary, *Skok* provides after approval “the web page is published ... by updating the server containing the web page.” [0073] There is no association, as recited in the pending claims. For at least this reason, claim 1 is patentable in light of the *Tatham-Dougherty-Skok* combination and the other references of record. Further, claims 2-5 and 7-9 (depending from claim 1) are patentable for the above stated reasons, as well as their own limitations.

Rejection of claims 10-20 under 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tatham*, *Thackston* and *Skok*

Claims 10-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tatham* in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,295,513 (*Thackston*) and *Skok*. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection of claims 10-20 because the *Tatham-Thackston-Skok* combination fails to teach, suggest, or disclose various aspects of these claims.

The *Tatham-Thackston-Skok* combination does not teach, disclose, or suggest the pending claims. For instance, this combinations does not provide the following limitations of claim 1:

- (1) "the team room user profile includes review authority for one or more of the team members in the pluralities of first and second team members"
- (2) "transmitting the data to at least one of the one or more team members having review authority for review and approval"; and
- (3) "receiving approval from the at least one of the one or more team members having review authority prior to associating the data with one or more of the activities"

According to the Examiner, "*Skok* teaches a bidirectional collaboration system which allows a user to add or edit data of a document and furthermore discloses sending the documents for approval by a webmaster or other nominated personnel before being published for others to view." (Office Action, February 24, 2005, p. 11).

Even assuming the Examiner is correct, *Skok* does not teach, disclose or suggest several limitations of the rejected claims. For example, *Skok* does not provide a "team room user profile" which includes "review authority for one or more team members". As another example, *Skok* does not provide "transmitting the data .. and receiving approval from the at least one of the one or more team members having review authority prior to associating the data with one or more of the activities". The *Tatham* and *Thackston* references do not cure the defective teachings of *Skok*, and the Examiner does not opine otherwise. For at least this reason, claim 10 is patentable in light of the *Tatham-Thackston-Skok* combination and the other references of record. Further, claims 11-20 (depending from claim 10) are patentable for the above stated reasons, as well as their own limitations.

Rejection of claims 21-25 under 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tatham* and *Skok*

Claims 21-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tatham* and *Skok*. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection of claims

21-25 because the *Tatham-Skok* combination fails to teach, suggest, or disclose various aspects of these claims.

The *Tatham-Skok* combination does not teach, disclose, or suggest the pending claims. This combination does not provide (1) "assigning a review authority" based on team membership or (2) "receiving approval ... prior to associating the data with one or more of the activities." The Examiner admits that *Tatham* does not provide these limitations. See Office Action, February 24, 2005, p. 18 ("Tatham fails to teach assigning a review authority to a member which receives data transmitted by other team members for review and approval prior to publishing the data for others to view.") *Skok* does not cure the defective teachings of *Tatham*. At best, *Skok* teaches the approval of web page drafts before the draft is posted on a web site. *Skok* does not address assigning review authority in the context of a collaborative, multi-organizational environment. *Skok* also does not provide association of approved data with team activities. To the contrary, *Skok* published approved web pages, and does not address the association of these web pages with team activities. For at least this reason, claim 21 is patentable in light of the *Tatham-Skok* combination and the other references of record. Further, claims 22-25 (depending from claim 21) are patentable for the above stated reasons, as well as their own limitations.


Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that the Office Action of February 23, 2005 has been fully responded to. Consequently, in view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully submitted.

No additional fee is believed to be due as the result of the filing of this paper. However, any additional fees or credits should be applied to Deposit Account 06-1510 (Ford Global Technologies, Inc.). A duplicate of this paper is being provided for that purpose.

If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the Examiner is invited to contact Matthew M. Jakubowski, Attorney for Applicants, at Examiner's convenience at (248) 358-4400.

Respectfully submitted,
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